



Portland Poynts

The Chronicle of the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society

September - October 2020 27 Prospect Circle, P. O. Box 108, Atlantic Highlands, NJ 07716-0108 ♦ www.AHhistory.org

Magical Musical Moment

By Walter Johnson and Audra Mariel

With a perfect summer's evening on August 20th, the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society resumed its Music at the Mansion series...this time outdoors on the back lawn while the mansion's spacious side porch served as the stage for the musicians. Ticket sales were limited to ensure more than adequate social distancing on the grass. It was a B.Y.O.E. event (BRING YOUR OWN EVERYTHING: food, beverages, lawn chairs/blankets, etc.) and prepaid attendees were required to wear face coverings to obtain admittance.

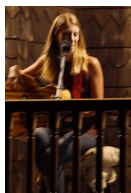
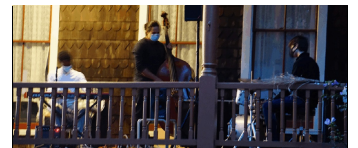
Host Audra Mariel introduced a talented lineup of musicians including April Centrone and Baiano, The Timothy Ogunbiyi Trio, Jennifer Santamaria, Trio Joe, and Insomniac Hotel.



April Centrone and Baiano performed a fusion of Afro-Brazilian and Arabic styles of music with April playing an oud (a short-neck lute-type, pear-shaped stringed instrument usually with 11 strings grouped in 6 courses) and an array of percussion instruments. Baiano sang (in Brazilian Portuguese), played congas, and beautifully demonstrated his dance/martial arts skills in Capoeira, a 16th century Afro-Brazilian martial art that combines elements of dance, acrobatics, and music developed by enslaved Africans in Brazil. He encouraged a sing-a-long and dancing on the lawn.

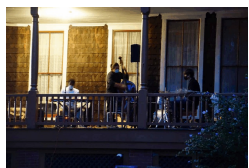


Timothy Ogunbiyi Trio, featuring Timothy Ogunbiyi on keyboard, Chris Pop on bass, and Ben Fig on drums played a variety of jazz standards.



Singer/songwriter Jennifer Santamaria shared some of her original works, playing guitar, harmonica, and singing. Jennifer expressed her delight at performing live music before a live audience, a sentiment loudly reflected by all in attendance. (continued on next page. 🐼)

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Trio Joe featured jazz with Joe Acc on guitar, Joe Peterson on bass, and Joe Brown Jr. on drums. These wonderful musicians are Music at the Mansion regulars.

Insomniac Hotel (Alec Fellman, featuring Jon Francis on guitarviol and projections by Maria Takeuchi). Alec employed a wide variety of instrumentation to expertly craft ambient soundscapes, including electronic and natural sounds, as well as prerecorded tracks and samplings, while projected amorphous images drifted across the mansion's facade. The audience was beguiled into utter silence.



For a few hours, the stresses of today's living were put aside as music lifted the spirits of everyone in attendance.

The Atlantic Highlands Historical Society is planning another outdoor music event on Thursday, September 24th. Details will be on the Society's website (AHhistory.org) when finalized.

This concert was a fund-raiser for the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society. As is its practice, the proceeds from ticket sales were shared with the performers. In this case, the performers agreed to donate their share to a nonprofit organization. After consideration, they chose Books and Breakfast (BnB) organized by Urban G.R.A.C.E. and co-sponsored by Turning Point United Methodist Church in Trenton, NJ. It is a space for members of the community to gather over a hot meal with access to a library of donated books. Every Saturday morning from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm over 200 people are served at a cost of \$500-\$600. Money generated by downloads of the edited video of the performance will also be shared between the two organizations.



Back in 1894. . .

the Strauss family would have been reading about...



September 1 ~ Over 400 people die in the Great Hinckley Fire, a pine forest fire in Hinckley, Minnesota, burning 200,000-250,000 acres including the town of Hinckley.

September 15 ~ First Sino-Japanese War: Empire of Japan defeats Qing dynasty China in the Battle of Pyongyang.

September 17 ~ Battle of Yalu River is the largest naval engagement of the First Sino-Japanese War.

September 23 ~ Bulgarian parliamentary election with unusually high voter turnout.

October 14 ~ Belgian general election held. Runoff election held October 21.

October 15 ~ The Dreyfus affair: Alfred Dreyfus is arrested for spying.

October 21 ~ 7.5 earthquake hits San Juan, Argentina, the most powerful ever recorded in Argentina.

October 30 ~ Veronese baker Domenico Melegatti obtains a patent for a procedure to be applied in industrially producing pandoro, a traditional Italian sweet bread, most popular around Christmas and New Year.

October 31 ~ Canada's Northwest Territories holds general election.

Not What We Envisioned for 2020

By Kendall Frantz, Acting President/Treasurer

This is not what we envisioned back in January when we were making plans for a great year for the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society. We have come a long way and things are getting better, at least in New Jersey, and we hope that this continues until the time comes for a safe and tested vaccine.

We wish you all the best in coping with the ramifications of the virus from loved ones being sick to children of all ages and how it affects their education and socialization, be it remote or in-person. To the front line workers who are putting their lives on the line. To all of you in the service industries, whether small business owners, cooks, waitstaff, bus drivers, those caring for our loved ones in nursing homes, et al, Thank you!!! Our deepest condolences go to anyone who lost a loved one or friend during this pandemic.

Our focus now is 2021! We anticipate opening the Strauss Mansion to visitors the third week of March or the beginning of April for self-guided house tours of the Strauss Mansion. We anticipate our Music at the Mansion commencing the last Thursday night of April. Details are being worked out by Audra Mariel who does such a fantastic job lining up the musicians and artists that entertain us. Check our website, AHhistory.org for details.

Weekend at Old Monmouth should be back the first weekend in May when 40-50 Historic Sites in Monmouth County are open. In July, we will have our annual Arts and Craft Fair at Veterans Park. Unfortunately, it was cancelled in 2019 because of excessive heat and this year because of Covid-19. Vendors should have quite a good inventory. Our Flea Market will be back down at the harbor with plenty of Society-cooked food and over 100 booths of collectibles of all kinds. We will have a Jersey Journey with Captain Dan aboard the new Navesink Queen that tours Sandy Hook Bay, so keep an eye on our website, www.ahhistory.org, for details, as well as a trip to Historic Morristown for the 2021 Christmas season. We hope Vintage Baseball game will be able to return to entertain us and make us appreciate the history of America's pastime played out in vintage uniforms and by rules of the past.

Our October Events committee will come up with some pretty ghoulish movies, stories and various haunts to enhance the 2021 Halloween Season over the course of two or three weekends. We will have to see what the Mansion spirits have in store for us.

We expect the Henry Hudson High School a capella choir to ring in the Christmas season with their annual concert the second or third week of December.

In the meantime, keep a positive attitude, stay safe and we will get through this together!

PLEASE wear a mask! PLEASE keep Social Distance! PLEASE wash your hands!

We look forward to seeing you again.

Portland Poynts, the original name of the area that became Atlantic Highlands, is the electronically published bi-monthly March-November newsletter of the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society, 27 Prospect Circle, Atlantic Highlands, NJ 07716. Incorporated in 1974, the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society at the Strauss Mansion is a volunteer-run 501(c)3 tax exempt organization committed to promoting interest in the past and present heritage and history of Atlantic Highlands through a variety of services and programs to the community at large. All donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Nosferatu Will Be Back; The Ghost Tours Will Not

By Greg Caggiano

Owing to the immense success of our outdoor benefit concerts, the annual screening of *Nosferatu* with live music will be back for the fifth straight year, held outside on the Strauss Mansion's expansive back lawn and wrap-around porch area. Maestro Cody McCorry will once again lead an ensemble band of talented musicians and their unique instruments, which in prior years have included a theremin, guitarviol, and buzz saw among others—and traditional ones too! To keep the event fresh, Cody has changed the musical score each year to accompany this 98-year-old classic horror film.

In the past, the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society has offered an extensive calendar of spooky events during October. In addition to *Nosferatu*, there were screenings of other horror films starring Vincent Price and Bela Lugosi, and, of course, ghost tours at the end of the month. Due to Covid-19 protocols, these events are not currently scheduled to occur. As of the publication of this newsletter, *Nosferatu* is the only Halloween-themed event planned for this October.

Even *Nosferatu* was in jeopardy. Thankfully the recent outdoor concerts have demonstrated that the logistics of such an event—with the band, a stage area, and socially-distant seating area—is possible to accomplish in our backyard. Bringing the film outside was the only way to save it and salvage just a tiny piece of October.

The October Committee—Joanne and Roy Delloso, Lou Fligor, and Patty Bickauskas—had grown accustomed to essentially living at the Mansion Museum in October due to the many events (usually every single Friday and Saturday night). This year, though, it appears we won't know what to do with ourselves!

There is the disappointment of the cancellation of the ghost tours. They have taken many forms over the year, such as being scripted “haunted house” jump-scare tours, and most recently, ghost hunting tours where the participants get a blend of actual ghost stories from the Mansion and hands-on paranormal investigating experience. Since groups ranged from 20-30 people in tight quarters as they traveled through the house, this is just not practical in 2020. We do hope everything will be back to normal in 2021.

Tickets for *Nosferatu* will be on sale on our website: AHhistory.org. Look for the GIFT SHOP tab at the top of your screen. Join me...



IF YOU DARE !!!

Happy hauntings!



Become a member of the Atlantic Highlands Historical Society and support its outreach and educational programs.

Membership categories:

\$10 student \$25 individual \$50 Family \$100 Supporter \$200 Sustaining \$500 benefactor

To become a member, complete the online form at AHhistory.org.



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Maid Duties During the Victorian Era

The Parlor Maid ~ A parlor maid was kept in the household in place of a single footman, her duties being the same as his would be. The parlor maid's duties included opening the door to visitors and guiding them to the drawing room, setting the table for breakfast, luncheon or dinner, clearing the table, and bringing the afternoon tea. She would be responsible for repairing the linen and waiting on the mistress when needed, and for helping in making the beds, maintaining the drawing room fireplace and fresh curtains. The parlor maid would wear a print gown and simple cap in the morning. Her dress would change to a simple black one with white collars, cuffs, and cap in the afternoon. The parlor maid was to work as noiselessly as possible. She was responsible for anticipating the movements of the diners at the table and handing them what they needed. The presence of a manservant in the dining room would act as butler while the maid would serve as the footman. When dinner was over, the parlor maid would remove items from the table, wash them and put them back in their place.

The Chambermaid ~ Her work started at 6:30 am. She would open the rooms and let the light flow in, sweep and dust the rooms and the halls. Then she would dust the hat, overcoat and other wearables needed by the master. The chambermaid would take the bedclothes off the bed and air them properly, this being one of her important duties. She made the beds, opened the bedroom windows and turned the mattress to air. She would also dust the furniture, woodwork and other objects around the house. Overall, she was responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of the house and the hygiene of the household. If it was not possible to do all the jobs before luncheon, she would clean the silverware afterward. The chambermaid also assisted in the pantry if there were dinner parties at night. She would draw the shades and light the gas lights when dusk fell, remove soiled towels and put out fresh ones, tidy the washstand and see that drinking water was available in all the bedrooms.



Second Chambermaid ~ If the chambermaid was overburdened, the second chambermaid would be in charge of the bedrooms on the third floor, the halls and the stairs.

Third Chambermaid ~ The third chambermaid would brush and dust the sewing room early in the morning so as not to disturb the lady's maids during their work. She tidied the rooms of the servants, the bathrooms, and the stairs, made the beds of the men, kitchen maids and cooks, and swept and dusted their rooms. She would keep the servants' hall in order and clean the silver for the table, as well as cleaning the dining hall.

The Waitress ~ The waitress had the same duties as that of a butler. She would be in charge of the dining room and the pantry, cleaning the silver and taking charge of the cooling and warming of the wines and serving the meals. She would also serve the refreshments required in the evening, carrying coffee and refreshments to the parlor. She would be in a black dress, white apron, and a cap before the lunch was served. At night she would secure all the doors and windows and extinguish the gas lights and lamps.

